NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the Commission Meeting
held on
September 24, 2026
6:00 p.m. - Pulaski County Innovation Center, Fairlawn

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Johnson, Chair, called the meeting to order.

PRESENT: Mr. H. **Johnson,** Town of Christiansburg, Chair; Ms. S. **Anderson,** Town of Blacksburg, Vice-Chair; Mr. C.B. **Andrews**, Town of Pembroke; Dr. R. **Brandon**, New River Community College; Mr. L. **Clevinger,** Town of Pulaski; Ms. A. **Davis**, Town of Pearisburg; Ms. L. **DeVito Kuchenbuch,** Floyd County; Mr. R. **Gibson**, Virginia Tech Foundation; Mr. A. **Grafsky,** Montgomery County; Mr. M. **Harvey**; Town of Blacksburg; Mr. D. **Horton**, City of Radford; Dr. A. **Joyner,** Radford University; Ms. L. **Morris**, Virginia Tech; Ms. L. **Ramsey**, Pulaski County; Mr. W. **Seagle**, Town of Dublin; Mr. T. **Spangler**, Town of Narrows and Mr. B. **Wheeler**, Montgomery County.

ABSENT: Mr. L. **Law,** Giles County, Treasurer; Mr. B. **Dawson**, Town of Pulaski; Mr. W. **Griffin**, Town of Floyd; Ms. T. **Hockett**, Town of Christiansburg; Mr. R. **McCoy**, Giles County Mr. M. **Mann**, Town of Rich Creek; Mr. M. **Maslaney,** Floyd County; Mr. J. **Martin**, City of Radford and Mr. J. **Reeves**, Pulaski County.

Staff Attendees: Kevin Byrd, Aphi Fancon, Chris Owens, Julie Phillips, Elijah Sharp, Christy Straight, and Jennifer Wilsie.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes for August

Mr. Johnson called for approval of the consent agenda item if there were no questions or changes.

Motion: Mr. Horton moved for the approval of the minutes. Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch seconded the motion.
Action: Motion carried unanimously.

B. Approval of Treasurer's report for June

Mr. Johnson called for approval of the consent agenda item if there were no questions or changes.

Motion: Dr. Brandon moved for the approval of the Treasurer's report. Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch seconded the motion.
Action: Motion carried unanimously.

III. COMMONWEALTH INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

A. Projects <u>(Signed-off by the staff)</u>

None

B. Regular Project Review
1. Radford University- Dalton Dining Hall

IV. PUBLIC ADDRESS

None

V. CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. Johnson reported he attended Field Day with Commission staff at Randolph Park and enjoyed spending time with everyone. Early voting started and he encouraged everyone to vote. He shared the draft version of the updated Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan which Regional Commission staff assisted in updating.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Byrd provided a summary report in the Regional Commission agenda packet. Radford University held two successful events recently, the AdventureWorks Outdoor Economy Summit, and Shaping Tomorrow: Building a Regional Economy Together. Mr. Byrd served on a panel at the latter event alongside Katie Boswell with Onward NRV and Carrie Chenery, the Virginia Secretary of Commerce and Trade. Dr. Angela Joyner served as moderator for the session.

Following the panel discussion, there were three additional economic development events the Secretary attended in the region: a visit to Hollingsworth & Vose in Floyd County, the unveiling of LOVE letters at Virginia Tech and the announcement of a new Virginia Tourism Corporation partnership branding with Virginia is for Hokie Lovers, and she finished the day providing remarks at Onward NRV's annual dinner event.

A budget request to increase state funding for all 21 planning districts in taking shape with the Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions. More information will be shared once the proposal is finished.

Affordable housing construction in Floyd County was highlighted by WDBJ this week. It is a great story of high school students learning construction trades and applying them to a local project. Linda DeVito Kuchenbuch was featured in the story as well.

The Regional + Local Housing Study is moving closer to securing the necessary funding for the planned update. ARC announced the planning grant award late last month and an application with Virginia Housing is moving through the last steps of its review process.

ReNew the New held another successful clean-up event this year on August 29th. Volunteers cleaned up river segments in Giles County, Montgomery County, and the City of Radford. Debris removal totaled 110 tires and 750 lbs. of trash pulled from the river.

The NRV Recovery Ecosystem ONEbox distribution across the region is going well. More than 250 boxes are installed. A press release was issued on the initiative and WDBJ, WSLS, and the Roanoke Rambler ran stories. If you know of a location that would like a ONEBox, please contact Anna Champion.

The Annual Awards Reception will be held on October 22nd at The Farmhouse in Christiansburg. A mobile workshop will take place in the afternoon prior to the reception.

The office construction project continues to make good progress and it is following the original schedule. Exterior brick work is complete and windows/doors were installed recently. The glass storefront was installed for the second floor meeting room. The next significant step will be pouring concrete curbing in the parking lot. Once that is complete, the rest of the exterior part of the project can advance. We are currently focused on the IT aspects of the project to include internet service, computer networking, and building security.

The annual audit took place last week. A significant amount of prep work was done by our finance team and, as a result, the onsite work is going smoothly. An audit report will be available for the board likely in January.

Staff held a Field Day lunch event on September 18th at Randolph Park in Pulaski County. It was exciting to recognize employees for their dedicated service to the region. There are 19 staff members with a total of 151 years of service.

VII. REVIEW OF MUTUAL CONCERNS AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Mr. Harvey reported The Local will hold its grand opening on October 14th at 11am. The Local is a retail incubator in downtown Blacksburg that supports small businesses.

Ms. Morris reported President Sands and his wife are excited to attend the annual awards reception. After meeting with the 911 Authority, Virginia Tech will be adding a tower at Kentland Farms to help with signal propagation.

Mr. Horton reported that the City of Radford announced the construction of a new travel center at I-81 Exit 105. Plans are also underway for a RV resort in the same area. Radford University and the City of Radford held a downtown strategic visioning workshop on September 23rd. Radford University and the City of Radford will hold the Highlander Festival on October 10th.

Mr. Grafsky reported that the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors held a joint meeting with the Planning Commission where they received an informational presentation on data centers.

Mr. Johnson reported that the Town of Christiansburg will hold Getting Scary on the Huckleberry 5k along with other events on October 31st from 9am until 11:30am.

Ms. Anderson reported that there are three constitutional amendments on the November ballot.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

None

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Remote Meeting Participation Policy

Mr. Byrd explained the Virginia State Code was amended in 2025 to permit public bodies to hold remote electronic meeting participation and hold all-virtual meetings, provided the governing body adopt a policy annually. The policy was included in the packet.

Motion: Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch moved to approve the remote meeting participation policy. Mr. Reeves seconded the motion.
Action: Motion carried unanimously.

B. Regional Commission FY27 Program of Work

Mr. Sharp provided an overview of the FY27 Program of Work. He explained the process utilized by staff to keep everyone on track with project progress and project billing. Ms. Fancon, Ms. Owens, and Ms. Wilsie each highlighted key projects included in the FY27 Program of Work. The community health team prepared a voice over video presenting its FY27 activities.

Motion: Mr. Horton moved to approve the FY27 Program of Work for the Regional Commission. Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch seconded the motion.
Action: Motion carried unanimously.

C. Set November/December and January Meeting

Mr. Byrd explained the regular Regional Commission meeting is scheduled for the fourth Thursday of each month as established in the agency bylaws. Each year, the board adjusts the November meeting date due to conflict with the Thanksgiving holiday. The Executive Committee recommends moving the meeting to Thursday, December 3rd.

Motion: Mr. Horton made a motion to hold the meeting on Thursday, December 3rd at 6:00pm. Mr. Harvey seconded the motion.
Action: Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Byrd explained the regular Regional Commission meeting is scheduled for the fourth Thursday of each month as established in the agency bylaws. The January meeting conflicts with Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions and Virginia Association of Counties Local Government Day in Richmond. The recommendation was to move the meeting to January 21st at 4pm.

Motion: Mr. Spangler made a motion to hold the meeting on Thursday, January 21st at 4:00pm. Ms. Anderson seconded the motion.
Action: Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Johnson called to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 pm.

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H. Johnson, Chair
New River Valley Regional Commission